



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE NABS VIOLATOR ON NATURALIZATION FRAUD, STRIPS HIM OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP

Suspect pleaded guilty to Naturalization Fraud and other crimes

FORT SMITH, Ark. — A Memphis, Tenn., man who was stripped of his U.S. citizenship after being convicted of naturalization fraud will soon face deportation charges by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents.

Hasan Ali Mohammad Ayesh, 42, is a Palestinian who emigrated from Israel in December 1984 and was naturalized as a U. S. citizen in May 2002. The chain of events that led to his criminal convictions and the revoking of his citizenship began when the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) in Arkansas investigated him at his place of business in West Memphis, Ark.

Hasan Ayesh was charged in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas with making a false statement under oath when he applied for citizenship. Since he was engaged in criminal activity before, during and after his naturalization, he willfully and unlawfully procured his U.S. citizenship through fraud.

Hasan ultimately pleaded guilty Nov. 16, 2004 to: two counts of aiding and abetting structuring financial transactions to evade reporting requirements, one count of Wire Fraud over \$10,000, and one count of Citizenship and Naturalization Fraud. He admitted that he attained his naturalization by making a false statement under oath. As part of his naturalization interview, he swore that he had not committed, been arrested and/or was involved in any criminal activity. Immigration law mandates the Federal Court revoke his citizenship at the time of sentencing.

“Revoking U.S. citizenship is relatively rare which demonstrates how serious the crime is,” said Resident Agent-in-Charge Rodrigo Reyes of the Ft. Smith, Arkansas ICE office. “Pursuing criminals like Hasan Ayesh who lie to gain United States citizenship, and then attempt to defraud the government is a high priority for ICE.”

Sentencing took place today. Immediately after sentencing ICE agents took Ayesh into custody and served him with a Notice to Appear before an immigration judge. Hasan Ayesh will remain in ICE custody, without bond, pending his hearing and subsequent removal from the United States.

U.S. Attorney Bud Cummins commended ICE and the JTTF for their vigorous pursuit of individuals who commit immigration fraud.

ICE special agents, are one of many Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies assigned to JTTF's throughout the U.S. to assist in a directed effort to secure public safety by enforcing the criminal laws of the United States.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.